

## REMARKS

By this paper, independent claims 1, 12 and 17 have been amended. Claim 1-35 remain pending.

In the outstanding Office action dated May 12, 2003, claims 1-3, 5-10, 12-15, 17-20, 22 and 23 were examined. Claims 1-3, 5-9, 12-15, 17, 18, 20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Chuter (6,454,795). Claims 10, 19 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Chuter reference.

In response to the rejections of the claims, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a medical apparatus having connection points between adjacent longitudinal members, the connection points lacking bulk and stress concentrations associated with conventional joining techniques. Similarly, independent claims 12 and 17 have been amended to recite a single piece endoprosthesis having connection points lacking bulk and stress concentrations associated with conventional joining techniques. It is respectfully submitted that such subject matter renders the pending claims patentable over the cited art. In particular, the cited Chuter reference relies on joining adjacent limbs by welding, soldering, riveting or gluing. It is submitted that such approaches result in connection points between adjacent members which are relatively bulky and result in stress concentrations in the assembled structure. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the examined claims are allowable over the cited art.

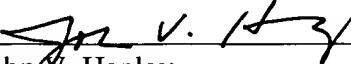
## CONCLUSION

Applicants have attempted to completely respond to the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office action. In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant

respectfully request that the application be reconsidered, the claims allowed and the application passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

FULWIDER PATTON LEE & UTECHT, LLP

By:   
John V. Hanley  
Registration No. 38,171

JVH/kst  
Howard Hughes Center  
6060 Center Drive, Tenth Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90045  
Telephone: (310) 824-5555  
Facsimile: (310) 824-9696  
Customer No. 24201  
21792.1